

## Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 5256

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S SIEBER'S VIEWS

1. KNOWING THAT GDR AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S. ROLF SIEBER WAS IN BERLIN ON CONSULTATION (AS IT TURNS OUT, A WORLDWIDE MEETING OF GDR AMBASSADORS) I INVITED HIM TO MY HOME ON FEBRUARY 13 AS A GESTURE OF COURTESY AND BECAUSE I HOPED TO OBTAIN HIS REACTIONS TO SOME THREE MONTHS OF WASHINGTON EXPERIENCE. ALSO PRESENT WERE DR. AND MRS. HANS-MARTIN GEYER (DIRECTOR OF FOREIGN MINISTRY'S NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION), MY WIFE, AND DCM AND MRS. GROVE. WHAT FOLLOWS IS A COMPILIATION OF AMBASSADOR SIEBER'S REMARKS IN INDIVIDUAL CONVERSATION WITH ME AND WITH DCM OVER A PERIOD OF NEARLY THREE HOURS. COMMENTS ON THE CONSULAR NEGOTIATIONS HAVE BEEN REPORTED SEPARATELY.

2. TRADE

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WE HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT SIEBER HAD PLANNED TO BRING THIS SUBJECT UP. HE EMPHASIZED THE GDR'S DESIRE TO INCREASE ITS TRADE WITH US AS EXPEDITIOUSLY AS POSSIBLE, NOTING THE PRESENCE IN WASHINGTON OF DR. PRESCHER, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF WERKZEUGMASCHINEN-WERKZEUGE AND REFERRING ALSO TO A FACORABLE RESPONSE IN CHICAGO TO AN EXHIBIT OF GDR PRINTING MACHINERY. SIEBER REFERRED TO HIS RECENT CALL ON COMMERCE'S DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR EAST-WEST TRADE, DOWNEY, NOTING THAT DOWNEY HAD A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF GERMAN AFFAIRS AND OF THE GDR AS A SOCIALIST STATE. HE SAID HE HOPED SOON TO BE ABLE TO RESUME HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH DOWNEY. HE THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT THAT GDR TRADE GROUPS CONTINUE TO VISIT THE U.S. HE HOPED THAT DISCUSSION OF A TRADE AGREEMENT BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES COULD BEGIN THIS YEAR, SAYING IN THIS CONNECTION THAT THE GDR ECONOMIC SYSTEM VIRTUALLY REQUIRES AN INTER-GOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT ON TRADE TO SERVE AS AN UMBRELLA FOR THE NUMEROUS TRANSACTIONS TO BE EFFECTED BETWEEN TWO

COUNTRIES. AMBASSADOR SIEBER EMPHASIZED THAT THE GDR WAS NOW CONCLUDING ITS ECONOMIC PLANNING FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. HE SAID HE HOPED THAT A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN TRADE WITH THE U.S. COULD BE BUILT INTO THIS PLAN AT AN EARLY DATE. REFERRING TO THE CONCELED VISIT TO THE U. S. OF GDR DEPUTY MINISTER OF TRADE BEIL, SIEBER SAID THAT THE GDR REGRETTED THIS ACTION, AND WAS CONCERNED WITH THE U.S. SUGGESTION OF A LINK BETWEEN INCREASED TRADE, WHICH A BEIL VISIT WOULD HOPEFULLY STIMULATE, AND SUCH UNRELATED MATTERS AS THE NEGOTIATION OF A CONSULAR AGREEMENT. HE SAID MORE THAN ONCE HE HOPED THAT BEIL WOULD BE ABLE TO VISIT THE U.S. DURING THIS CALENDAR YEAR. WE REVIEWED THE REASONS FOR THE CANCELLATION OF THE BEIL VISIT, OMITTING ANY LINKAGE TO PROGRESS IN OTHER AREAS, AND AGREED WITH HIS HOPE THAT BEIL WOULD BE ABLE TO COME TO THE US BEFORE 1976.

### 3. OFFICIAL CALLS.

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SIEBER SAID HE HAD BEEN VISITING A NUMBER OF U.S. OFFICIALS, INCLUDING MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, MENTIONING SENATORS SCOTT AND EASLAND AND SPEAKER ALBERT. HE HOPES TO SEE SECRETARY KISSINGER SOME TIME SOON AND TO MEET AGAIN WITH THE PRESIDENT. HE THEN TOLD ME THAT I WOULD SOON BE SEEING CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, SINDERMAN, EXPLAINING THAT SINDERMAN PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE GDR DECISION-MAKING

PROCESS. I REMARKED THAT I HOPED THE SECRETARY, WHOSE SCHEDULE -- AS SIEBER KNEW -- WAS ALMOST UNBELIEVABLY BURDENSOME, WOULD BE ABLE TO FIND TIME FAIRLY SOON FOR A MEETING WITH THE GDR AMBASSADOR

#### 4. LIVINGSTON ARTICLE

EARLY ON IN HIS CONVERSATION WITH THE DCM, SIEBER REFERRED WITH OBVIOUS CONCERN TO THE DECEMBER 16, 1974 ARTICLE IN THE BALTIMORE SUN BY FORMER FSO R.G. LIVINGSTON. SIEBER NOTED THAT LIVINGSTON WAS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR A FRUITFUL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE GDR, HAVING WRITTEN THAT NOT MUCH SHOULD BE EXPECTED FOR SOME YEARS TO COME. THE ARTICLE IN GENERAL HAD A NEGATIVE TONE, AND SIEBER WAS CONCERNED BY REMARKS OF DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS THAT THIS BARREN ASSESSMENT WAS INDEED WHAT THE DEPARTMENT EXPECTED. DCM REPLIED THAT LIVINGSTON HAD WRITTEN THE SUN ARTICLE IN A PRIVATE CAPACITY AND NOT AS A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS. HE POINTED OUT THAT LIVINGSTON HAD LEFT THE FOREIGN SERVICE AND WAS NOW AT WORK WITH THE GERMAN MARSHALL FUND OF THE U.S. SIEBER REMAINED UNCONVINCED AND SAID THAT IF WE HAD NO EXPECTATION OF IMPROVING OUR RELATIONS WITH THE GDR BY MEANINGFUL AGREEMENTS AND EXCHANGES THIS WOULD BE A MAJOR DISAPPOINTMENT TO THE GDR REGIME.

#### 5. GOALS

SIEBER TALKED PHILOSOPHICALLY ABOUT EXPECTATIONS IN OUR RELATIONS FOR THE COMING YEAR. HE SAID WE LIVE IN A TIME OF CHANGE BOTH WITHIN SOCIALIST AND CAPITALIST COUNTRIES. HE HAD BEEN FOLLOWING EVENTS IN THE U.S., PARTICULARLY IN THE ECONOMY, WITH FASCINATION. HE  
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BELIEVED IMPORTANT THAT BY SEPTEMBER 4 OF THIS YEAR, WHICH WILL MARK THE FIRST YEAR OF OUR RELATIONSHIP, BOTH COUNTRIES WOULD BE ABLE TO SHOW THAT WE CAN WORK TOGETHER AND STRENGTHEN OUR TIES IN A REALISTIC WAY. SPECIFICALLY, HE HOPED CONSULAR NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE SUCCESSFULLY CONCLUDED BY SEPTEMBER, THAT A BEIL VISIT WOULD OCCUR THIS YEAR, THAT GDR TRADE DELEGATIONS (PARTICULARLY IN THE AREA OF MACHINE TOOLS AND CHEMICALS) WOULD VISIT THE U.S., AND THAT WE COULD BEGIN TO DISCUSS A TRADE AGREEMENT. SIEBER SAID HE HAD A SPECIAL INTEREST IN CSCE AND HAD FOUND HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS CONCERNED WITH CSCE TO BE PROFITABLE. HE HOPED THAT A SUCCESSFUL CSCE WOULD IN TURN REFLECT AN IMPROVED ENVIRONMENT FOR US/GDR RELATIONS.

7. COMMENTS

WE FOUND AMBASSADOR SIEBER IN A GOOD MOOD AND IN GOOD HUMOR. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT HE ENJOYS HIS PRESENT ASSIGNMENT IMMENSELY AND THAT HE HAS BEEN AFFECTED BY THE DYNAMISM OF U.S. LIFE. HE REFERRED A NUMBER OF TIMES TO WHAT HE WAS LEARNING ABOUT "DEMOCRACY" WITH EVIDENT INTELLECTUAL CURIOSITY AND A CERTAIN RESPECT THAT HE MADE NO EFFORT TO CONCEAL. SIEBER SAID DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS HAD MADE HIM AND HIS STAFF

FEEL WELCOME. HE LEFT US WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT WITHIN THE LIMITS OF THE POSSIBLE HE IS ANXIOUS TO SEE OUR RELATIONS IMPROVE--PARTICULARLY IN THE AREAS OF TRADE

AND TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSFER WHICH ARE OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO HIS COUNTRY. COOPER

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